United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1167
22 June 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General to meet with Nelson Mandela at OAU Summit in Dakar next week; will inform Security Council of situation in South Africa afterwards; Anti-Apartheid Committee expresses grave concern over massacre in Johannesburg area on 17 June.

+ Secretary-General proposes establishment of two regional bureaus in capitals of Armenia and Azerbaijan to observe situation in the region; Security Council expresses concern over "the constant use of force in that region"; appeals to all parties to cooperate with Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

+ United Nations observers are withdrawn from Sarajevo airport on Saturday, 20 June, as cease-fire breaks down again.

+ Secretary-General is "deeply concerned" about escalation of violence in Moldova over the weekend; consulting on possibility of sending fact-finding mission to the area; the President of Moldova reiterates his willingness for political settlement "by peaceful means".

+ General Assembly President, addressing North American Seminar, says just solution to Palestine question must remain high on international agenda.

+ International Development Association -- World Bank affiliate -- to provide $100 million to China for environment and infrastructure in Tianjin.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali informed the Security Council this morning that he had received a telephone call from Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress (ANC), concerning the massacre in South Africa on 17 June, in which 39 people were reportedly killed. Mr. Mandela expressed to the Secretary-General his concern over the "deterioration of the situation in South Africa" which had led him to suspend talks with the Government.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

According to a United Nations spokesman, the Secretary-General will meet with Mr. Mandela when both attend the summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to take place in Dakar on 29 and 30 June. The spokesman said "the matter will be taken up with the South African Government".

The Secretary-General will subsequently inform the Council of his assessment of the situation.

Meanwhile, the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Jayaraj Acharya (Nepal), has expressed grave concern over the massacre, which reportedly occurred when armed men randomly attacked residents of Boiphatong and Slovo in the Johannesburg area on 17 June.

In a statement issued on Friday, 19 June, the Special Committee said the escalating violence in South Africa continued "to demonstrate the inability or unwillingness of the South African authorities to put an end to it". The timing of the massacre gave credence to allegations that the violence was orchestrated and was aimed at disrupting ongoing efforts to foster a peaceful political process, the statement said.

The Special Committee called on the South African authorities to take firm and prompt action to identify the perpetrators of the killings, as well as their "possible accomplices among the security forces", and bring them to justice. It also urged the South African authorities to ensure the implementation of all the provisions of the National Peace Accord, and in particular, called for a total ban on the carrying of dangerous weapons.

In a related development, the Committee plans to hold a meeting at Headquarters on 29 and 30 June, with the participation of major United States and Canadian Anti-Apartheid Movements, as well as other non-governmental organizations concerned and foundations. The meeting is part of the Committee's 1992 work programme aimed at monitoring and encouraging international support for the peace process in South Africa.

* * *

The Security Council this morning heard an oral report by the Secretary-General on the findings of a United Nations fact-finding mission to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Following its consultations, Council President Paul Noterdaeme (Belgium) told correspondents that the Council was "preoccupied by the constant use of force in that region" and that it had launched an appeal to all the parties to adhere to the principles and procedures of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). He said the CSCE was leading efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and would hold a meeting in Rome on 29 June concerning the situation in that region.

In the meantime, the Secretary-General would establish immediately two bureaus in the capitals of Azerbaijan and Armenia to oberve the situation and study ways and means of providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees in

(more)

the region. The Secretary-General would also study ways and means of assisting the CSCE in its efforts, eventually by sending an observer group to the region to back up the efforts of the CSCE. That question would be taken up by the Security Council after the meeting in Rome, he said.

The Council President emphasized that it was not for the United Nations to lead the diplomatic process of reconciliation in Nagorno-Karabakh; that was incumbent upon the CSCE as the leading regional organization. The Secretary-General was expected to send a United Nations representative to the meetings in Rome, he said.

* * *

In Sarajevo, fighting erupted again, according to a United Nations spokesman. He told correspondents that the cease-fire had been violated "heavily all day" and that "serious incidents" had occurred involving civilians in Sarajevo.

The United Nations observers previously sent to the city had been withdrawn from the airport to the headquarters of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). During the withdrawal, three Canadian observers were wounded, one seriously, the spokesman said.

Chief of Staff of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia, Brigadier General MacKenzie, was continuing consultations with both sides in an effort to re-establish the cease-fire.

* * *

The Secretary-General is "deeply concerned" about the escalation of violence in Moldova, which had affected hundreds of people during the weekend, a United Nations spokesman said today.

The Secretary-General had called on all parties concerned to end the senseless fighting and to observe the utmost restraint. He also called on the parties to respect human rights and protect minorities in conformity with the United Nations Charter and other agreements to which the parties are bound.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali was consulting with the parties about the dispatch of a fact-finding mission to the area, the spokesman said.

In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General today, the President of Moldova, Mircea Snegur, reiterated his willingness to reach a "political settlement of the conflict in the eastern part of Moldova by peaceful means".

* * *

The President of the General Assembly, Samir S. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), this morning told the Eighth United Nations North American Seminar on the Question of Palestine that at a time when the world was witnessing a major relaxation in international tensions, it was incumbent upon the United

(more)

Nations, in particular, to keep the search for a just solution to the question of Palestine high on the international agenda.

He urged adherence to the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention, saying the restoration of respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Palestinians living in the occupied territory, including Jerusalem, would help create a climate more conducive to a just peace. "We should not deceive ourselves", the Assembly President said, "national rights and basic human rights are the foundation, without which no security or peace can be upheld".

* * *

** About 9 million people will benefit from a project designed to improve the environment and infrastructure in the city of Tianjin and surrounding districts in China. The project will receive $100 million in assistance from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's affiliate for concessionary lending.

Tianjin, the third largest city in China, has experienced many of the stresses associated with rapid urban and industrial growth. Poor conditions in housing and industrial pollution pose a challenge to the municipal government. The IDA project is expected to strengthen the urban planning and management systems of the municipal government to help it meet the challenges posed by urban development.

A second aspect of the assistance programme to be provided by the IDA, involves a credit of $15 million to support the reduction of pollution in Chinese and international waters through a ship waste disposal project. Currently, an estimated 800,000 to 900,000 tons of ship waste is being discharged annually into coastal and international waters around China. The Global Environmental Facility is also contributing $30 million to the ship waste project.

* *** *